

REMARKS

Claims 1-3, 5-10, 12, and 14-16 are pending in this application. Claims 4, 11, 13, and 17-20 have been previously withdrawn from consideration in the application. Please cancel claim 16 without prejudice or disclaimer. New claims 21-23 are added herewith. Applicants have amended claim 1. No new matter has been added by this Amendment.

Applicants thank the Examiner for indication that claims 10 and 16 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claims and any intervening claims, and claim 16 amended to overcome the rejection(s) under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph. See Office Action at p. 5. Accordingly, independent claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the elements of dependent claim 16. The rejection under U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, is addressed below.

Drawing Objections

The Examiner has objected to the drawings as failing to comply with 37 CFR 1.84(p)(4) because “reference character ‘108’ has been used to designate a pressure-insertion end portion, a leading end portion in Figure 5, and a pressure insertion portion (FIG. 4); and , character ‘ 109’.” Applicants respectfully submit that the reference numerals 108 and 109 in FIG. 4 were inadvertently transposed. Accordingly, Applicants submit herewith a proposed amended FIG. 4, marked in red ink to address the informality. Therefore, Applicants submit that the objection to the drawings on this ground has been overcome.

The Examiner objected to the drawings under 37 CFR 1.83(a). Specifically, the Examiner indicates that the connection portion (claim 9) must be shown in the figures or the

feature(s) canceled from the claim(s). Applicants respectfully submit that the connection portion is shown in the Figures. By way of example only, page 17, line 6 of the specification discloses, "The connection portion between the slope surface 105 and the step portion 104 is formed with a relief portion 106...." These elements may be seen in the figures, for example in FIG. 2. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that this objection is moot.

Specification Objections

The Examiner has objected to the specification as failing to provide proper antecedent basis for the claimed subject matter. Specifically, the Examiner alleges that correction of the following is required: "the step portion is tapered so that the outer diameter of the step portion is made smaller toward the leading end portion" (claim 10), and "the serration portion is tapered so that the outer diameter of the serration portion is made smaller toward the leading end portion" (claim 12) is not provided in the description of Figure 5.

Applicants respectfully submit that the specification does provide proper antecedent basis for the elements of claims 10 and 12. For example, on page 26, lines 12-14 and 21-24 recite:

[the metal-made yoke] may be formed in such a tapered fashion that the dimension Db of the outer diameter of the step portion 104 is made smaller toward the leading end portion 108s.

[the metal made yoke] may be formed in such a tapered fashion that the dimension Dc of the outer diameter of the serration portion 107 is made smaller toward the leading end portion 108s.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that the objection to the specification is moot.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 112

The Examiner has rejected claim 16 under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. Specifically, the Examiner indicates that the term “FRP-made” is unclear. Applicants herein amend “FRP-made” to recite --fiberglass reinforced plastic-- as in amended independent claim 1. Accordingly, Applicants request withdrawal of the Examiner’s rejection on this ground.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 102

The Examiner has rejected claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Japanese patent JP 05-139170. Also, the Examiner has rejected claims 1-3, 6-8, 14, and 15 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by Patzig (US 2,016,753). Further, claims 1, 2, and 9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Hood (US 4,330,914). Applicants respectfully request reconsideration in view of the amendment.

Applicants have amended independent claim 1 to incorporate the elements of allowable dependent claim 16. See Office Action, page 9. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that amended independent claim 1 and any claims directly or indirectly dependent therefrom are now in an allowable condition. Therefore, Applicants request withdrawal of the rejections of the claims on these grounds.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 103

The Examiner has rejected claim 5 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Patzig (US 2,016,753). Also, the Examiner has rejected claim 12 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Patzig, in view of Artzberger, US 4,950,101.

Applicants respectfully submit that in light of the amendment discussed above, amended independent claim 1 and claims 5 and 12, which are indirectly dependent thereon, are in condition for allowance. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejections on these grounds.

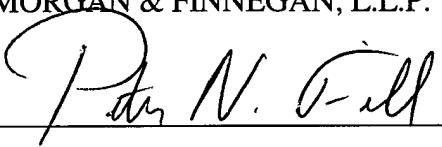
CONCLUSION

It is now believed that all pending claims are in condition for allowance. In view of the amendments and remarks, an early and favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

MORGAN & FINNEGAN, L.L.P.

By:


Peter N. Fill
Registration No. 38,876

Dated: May 5, 2003

Correspondence Address:

MORGAN & FINNEGAN, L.L.P.
345 Park Avenue
New York, NY 10154
(212) 758-4800 (telephone)
(212) 751-6849 (facsimile)